STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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A CINC FOR AFRICA- IS IT TIME TO RETHINK THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN?

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ABSTRACT

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The Unified Command Plan (UCP) was established in 1946, and has guided U.S. military operations since that time. The UCP prescribes high-level command arrangements for the operational forces of the United States on a global basis, and establishes the missions, responsibilities and force structure for the unified combatant commands. Since its inception, the UCP has been revised seventeen times in reaction to changes in the strategic environment, changes in technology, and the growing worldwide commitment of U.S. forces. This notwithstanding, the primary focus of the UCP has remained the Atlantic, European and Pacific areas of responsibility, with Africa being relegated to the position of a "limited engagement" theater. However, the end of the Cold War dramatically altered the international geo-political situation and refocused world attention on humanitarian tragedies in Africa. The result has been that the largest number of foreign and U.S. military interventions in any

region in the 1990s has been directed towards Sub-Saharan Africa.

The changing strategic environment requires the creation of a unified combatant command with exclusive responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa. Otherwise, the United States will inevitably continue to react to events rather than effectively shaping the environment to avoid the necessity for expensive military interventions.

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A CINC FOR AFRICA - IS IT TIME TO RETHINK THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN?

In 1946, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recognizing the importance of the unity of military effort achieved by U.S. forces during World War II, created an organizational directive, the "Outline Command Plan." This was the first in a series of documents specifying an arrangement now known as the Unified Command Plan. Among other things, this plan divided the world into geographic regions and gave responsibility to a designated military command for protecting U.S. security interests in each region.

The Unified Command Plan establishes missions, responsibilities, and force structure, and prescribes high-level command entities to control the operational forces of all the services on a global basis. This organizational philosophy has had a major impact on post World War II U.S. military operations.[1]

Over the last fifty-three years, the Unified Command Plan has been revised seventeen times in reaction to a changing strategic environment, changes in technology and the growing global commitment of U.S. forces.[2] Legislation adopted in 1979 specified that the Unified Command Plan be reviewed biennially.[3] The President approved the current Unified Command Plan on 29 January 1998.

In this latest review, there were no regional or functional changes pertaining to the continent of Africa. In fact, nothing in the language of this assessment directly addressed Africa.[4] While this may be consistent with Department of Defense declarations that the United States has "very little traditional strategic interests in Africa,"[5] it is a somewhat puzzling assertion in light of the fact that the United States has intervened militarily in the region more than twenty times since 1990.[6]

With the plethora of destabilizing conditions on the continent not only continuing but also increasing in the near term, now is the time to rethink the Unified Command Plan as it regards Africa. Responsibility for this region is divided amongst four of the five regional unified commands. Given America's tendency not to anticipate African crises, the current Unified Command Plan cannot effectively protect America's security interests in Africa, and is unlikely to realize the Administration's articulated policy objectives in the region. The existing Unified Command Plan should be revised to better secure U.S. regional objectives.

THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN

The National Security Act of 1947 provides the legal basis for the President, through the Secretary of Defense, and with

the advice and assistance of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, to establish unified combatant commands.[7] This legal authority is further codified in Title 10, United States Code.[8] Specifically, a unified combatant command is a military organization with a broad, continuing mission composed of forces from two or more military departments (i.e. Army, Navy, Air Force) under the command of a single commander.[9] Unified commands are organized around a regional or functional mission.

The current UCP is composed of five regional and four functional unified combatant commands.[10] The five regional commands are the U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM), U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM), U.S. European Command (USEUCOM), U.S. Pacific Command (USPACOM) and U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). The four functional commands are the U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM), U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM).[11]

Unified combatant commands are responsible to the President and the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary with the approval of the President assigns military missions to them.[12] Their responsibilities include the development and production of joint operation plans. Such plans, developed during peacetime, are intended to deter war. But in contingency situations, these plans provide for the transition to war (or to military

operations other than war). Once hostilities have started, the staff of a unified command plans and conducts campaigns and major operations to accomplish assigned missions.[13]

The Commanders in Chief (CINCs) of the unified commands represent the United States in a unique way. In addition to their purely military roles, they also have come in recent years to play important diplomatic roles as well - by using U.S. military resources to enhance U.S. access and influence, and communicating regularly with senior foreign civil and military leaders on a variety of issues.[14] No other organization of the U.S. government is manned or equipped to play a "regional" role of this magnitude.[15]

In its essence, a unified command is the primary organization charged with protecting America's security interests in a geographic region of the world. It does this by managing U.S. military resources stationed in the region - or deployed to the region during contingency operations. It also accomplishes this task by maintaining security-related relations with the foreign countries in the region, endeavoring to build trust and "habits of cooperation" that permit quick agreement and common action to resolve regional conflict. Assisting America's diplomats in building coalitions and maintaining alliances is, thus, a key role of the unified command. Such a

role is particularly important in regions where U.S. resources are limited.

HISTORY OF THE UNIFIED COMMAND PLAN AND AFRICA

President Truman approved the "Outline Command Plan," in effect, the first Unified Command Plan, on 14 December 1946.[16] It established seven unified commands: Far East Command; Pacific Command; Alaskan Command; Northeast Command; Atlantic Fleet; Caribbean Command; and the European Command.[17] Conspicuous in its absence from this original plan was any assignment of responsibility for the continent of Africa. In fact, it was not until changing events in the European theatre in 1952 necessitated a revision to the Unified Command Plan that responsibility for at least part of Africa was first assigned to a unified combatant command.[18] This assignment occurred on 2 December 1952, when, recognizing the historical ties between North Africa and Europe, the European Command was given responsibility for the Algerian Departments of France, along with joint planning requirements for French Morocco, Tunisia and Libya.

It would take the threat of a communist takeover of the newly independent Congo in 1960 to bring further attention by the U.S. security establishment to the whole of the African region. In response to the Congo crisis, the Atlantic Command

was given responsibility for plans and operations pertaining to Sub-Saharan Africa, while the European Command maintained responsibility for North Africa. In reaction to further problems in the Congo in 1962, the Unified Command Plan was again revised, with the then recently established United States Strike Command (USSTRICOM) assuming full responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa from the Atlantic Command. This Unified Command Plan remained relatively unchanged for the remainder of the decade.

In September 1969, Deputy Secretary of Defense David A. Packard directed an extensive review of the unified commands. The results were approved by the President on 21 April 1971, and included the disestablishment of the United States Strike/Middle East-Africa-South Asia Command (USSTRICOM/USCINCMEAFSA). All areas of responsibility assigned to USSTRICOM/USCINCMEAFSA, with the exception of Sub-Saharan Africa, were reassigned to the remaining unified commands. Responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa would remain unassigned to a unified command for the next 11 years. Although debate about the status of this region continued throughout the remainder of the decade, it would not be until the 1982 biennial review of the Unified Command Plan (as newly mandated by Title 10 of the U.S. Code) that the matter of responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa would be officially addressed.[19]

By the early 1980s, U.S. strategic planners were ascribing more importance to Africa's position astride principal sea lines of communication and were increasingly concerned about access to the strategic minerals in the central and southern regions of the continent. U.S. strategic planners were also worried growing Cuban and Soviet involvement in the region, a characteristic feature of U.S. foreign policy during the Reagan presidency.

As a signal to both allies and adversaries of the increasing importance of Sub-Saharan Africa to the United States, all countries in Africa south of the Sahara were added to the Unified Command Plan of October 3, 1983. This plan, recognizing the longstanding links between certain NATO countries and their former colonies, assigned all states above and below the Sahara, except those bordering the Red Sea, to the European Command (USEUCOM). Seven countries in the northeast corner of the continent, specifically Sudan, Egypt, Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia (and eventually Eritrea) were subsequently assigned to Central Command. Responsibility for the island nations in the waters surrounding Africa remained with either the Atlantic or Pacific commands. Notwithstanding the major geopolitical changes occurring in the world and Africa since the end of the Cold War, this assignment of responsibilities for the African continent has remained relatively unchanged since 1983.

The latest assessment of the Unified Command Plan occurred in January 1997, and was approved by the President on 29 January 1998. The implementation of this Unified Command Plan reassigned some geographic responsibilities of the European and Central Commands, shifted responsibility for the Caribbean Basin, and clarified the unassigned status of the Caspian Sea.[20] However, this revision of the Unified Command Plan made no regional or functional changes pertaining to the continent of Africa. In fact, nothing in this latest assessment of the unified combatant commands addressed Africa. So why after all these years and in view of all these revisions does not Africa, and specifically, Sub-Saharan Africa, warrant its own unified command?

WHY A UNIFIED COMMAND FOR SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA?

The existing Unified Command Plan assigns responsibility for Africa to four different unified commands. However, no unified command features Africa as its principal focus. This division of responsibility makes it difficult for the U.S. to prioritize its regional security interests and pursue them consistently.[21] This is especially true in a region as complicated as Africa. The lack of an overarching strategy and integrated programming hampers the effectiveness of virtually all security-related U.S. programs in Sub-Saharan Africa.[22]

The U.S. military is not alone in failing to maximize its regional effectiveness. The multiple U.S. government agencies involved in Africa have been criticized for a similar failure to coordinate their efforts to effectively secure U.S. interests in the region.[23] Because of the subsequent inability to shape the emerging regional security environment, is it little wonder that the U.S. government and the Department of Defense are regularly obliged to commit expensive interventions in response to crises in Africa.[24] A quick look at Africa highlights the necessity for a more coherent strategy.

The continent of Africa is the second largest and second most populous landmass in the world. The great expanse of the Sahara Desert separates the population of Africa racially, economically and religiously across the north and south of the continent. The societies north of the desert have strong cultural, ethnic and religious ties to the Arab Middle East. Islam is the predominant religion. In some respects, North Africa is more a part of the Arab Middle East or Mediterranean Basin than of Sub-Saharan Africa,[25] and for this reason is outside the scope of this discussion. Rather, the interest here is the forty-eight countries and 700 million people of "Sub-Saharan" Africa.

With internal relationships differentiated by nationality, ethnicity, subregionality (central, eastern, western and

southern sub-regions), language (Anglophone, Francophone, Lusophone), sub-regional economic ties, and religion (Christian, Muslim, traditional), the environment of Sub-Saharan Africa may be the most complex on earth.[26] Africa's population is diverse, divided among 3,000 indigenous ethnic groups speaking over 1,000 different indigenous languages. About a third of this number would be considered at least nominally Islamic. Over half claim adherence to some form of Christianity.[27]

The region has tremendous mineral wealth, huge hydro-electrical power reserves, and significant underdeveloped ocean resources. The better part of the world's diamonds, gold and chromium are produced in countries at the southern end of the continent. Some twenty percent of America's oil now is imported from Africa. Copper, bauxite, phosphate, uranium, tin, iron ore, cobalt and titanium are also mined in significant quantities. The waters off both coasts of the continent support huge fisheries. In short, the continent's potential as a market and as a source of important commodities is great.

Yet for all its economic potential, Sub-Saharan Africa is the most marginalized region of the world. Of the twenty poorest nations of the world, eighteen are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Of all the world's peoples, Africans have the least chance to survive to five, or live to fifty. Africa has the highest infant mortality rates and highest death rates in

the world, reflecting poor health care, sanitation and diets. Life expectancy is the lowest in the world and forecast to decrease dramatically due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic throughout large areas of the sub-continent, with Africa accounting for more than two-thirds of the world's HIV cases.[28] Ironically, Africa's annual population growth rate, exceeding three percent, is the highest in the world, rapidly adding to already unsupportable population levels. Over forty percent of the population is under the age of fifteen. This population is stressed by health threats including drug resistant and lethal strains of malaria and tuberculosis. Other diseases like sleeping sickness, schistosomiasis and river blindness, once thought under control, have made a comeback in recent years. African countries lack the resources to cope with natural disasters or to provide a health and educational infrastructure adequate to the challenges they face.

While some attribute the problems of Sub-Saharan Africa to the legacy of European colonialism, present day difficulties are much more complicated and deeper than that. True enough, the colonial borders separated ethnically related peoples, undermined indigenous patterns of sustenance and trade and left Africa with fifty-three different states, based on external models of political organization. But not all of Africa's problems can or should be traced to the seventy odd years of

European colonialism or simply to differences in race, religion, ethnicity or artificial borders.

A view of the map of Africa shows it to be highly balkanized, consisting of many mini-states (37 boast populations of 10 million or less) and some 15 landlocked independent states (40 percent of the world's total).[29] Yet if African statehood were determined solely by ethnicity, the continent could boast up to 3,000 political entities, a situation that would exacerbate the problem of "mini-states."

Sub-Saharan Africa's legacy includes a much more intractable problem: societies divided between the descendants of landowners and peasants, former slaves and former slave owners, and those peoples who were favored by their colonizers and those who were not.[30] Rulers of post-colonial Africa have exploited these differences to garner personal and political support from sub-groups identified by class, caste, ethnicity and religion.

Economic and military assistance rendered by the former Soviet Union and the United States during the period of the Cold War somewhat mitigated and obscured these differences, relegating them to the background of world events. But the vacuum created by the end of that conflict has allowed Africa's destabilizing diversities to come to the forefront. The result has been the extraordinary human tragedies of countries like Liberia, Somalia, Sudan, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of

the Congo. Africa's problems will persist for generations, and the developed world will be confronted with Africa's tragedies into the indefinite future.

The stability of Africa is not only threatened by intra-state and environmental problems. In the immediate aftermath of independence in the early 1960s, African leaders generally agreed to respect their neighbors' sovereignty.[31] The inviolability of colonial borders was perhaps the most fundamental principle in the charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was established in 1963. However, by the end of the 1990s, this principle was under serious challenge as one secessionist state (Eritrea) attained independence, and Africans themselves began to intervene with conventional military forces in their neighbors' civil wars.[32]

The end of the Cold War conflict by all accounts should have led to a substantial reduction of warfare in Africa.[33] Since the ability for African states to make war was greatly amplified and extended by the support provided by competitors in the Cold War rivalry, the end of that conflict should have vastly reduced Africa's capacity for making war.[34] However, quite the opposite has occurred. For the first time in Africa's history, eight independent nations are in a direct, pan-African conflict in an ongoing civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.[35] For several of these actors, their actions come on top of their own

ongoing internal conflicts. Elsewhere in Africa, instability and fighting continues in Burundi, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, the Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and between Ethiopia and Eritrea.[36] Rather than reduce warfare in Africa, the end of the international bipolar geo-strategic competition has seen the overall weakening of African states and the intensifying of interstate and intrastate conflicts.[37]

These African conflicts are further exacerbated by an unchecked flow of illicit arms into Africa from a variety of sources - arms dealers, security firms, and governments pursuing their individual agendas.[38] Arms bought by governments and other groups involved in these armed conflicts circulate throughout sub-regions. More than 25 percent of all the countries on the globe are connected in one way or another with arms entering Africa.[39] On 19 November 1998, the UN Security Council passed a resolution expressing its "grave concern at the destabilizing effect of illicit arms flows, in particular of small arms, to Africa."[40] Unfortunately, the extent of the problem is so great, and action to date so limited and so late, that even if the shipment of arms into Africa ended tomorrow, the problem will persist into the indefinite future. Additionally, at least two African countries (South Africa and Nigeria) produce their own weapons, and several African nations produce their own small arms ammunition.[41]

Africa's conflicts have led to the humanitarian tragedies of traumatized, displaced populations and innumerable refugees. These, and the epidemic diseases and predatory criminality that often emerges in such environments, are problems generally beyond the capacity of humanitarian relief agencies to cope. The result is that humanitarian problems caused by ongoing military conflict cannot be solved by humanitarian relief agencies, and must eventually be solved by diplomatic, military or political action. For Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s, this has typically meant foreign military intervention.

Potential requirements for U.S. military involvement in Africa increased with the announcement by France in 1997 that it would reduce its military force on the continent by 40 percent, encouraging much of Francophone Africa increasingly to look to the United States as a patron for security issues. It is important to recall that there is no permanent stationing of U.S. forces (other than defense attaches, security assistance officers and Marine embassy guards) in Africa.[42]

Despite - or perhaps because of - the conflicts on the continent, African countries themselves are demonstrating unprecedented interest in regional solutions. African nations are experimenting with security arrangements and sub-regional approaches to conflict management, and are more open to cooperation with the United States on security issues than at

any time in the past. This affords a substantial opportunity for the U.S. to shape the regional security environment, but an opportunity, which may be of limited duration.[43]

Although African political dynamics are in a period of great flux, U.S. policy makers and military planners have surprisingly little access to much of what goes on behind the scenes among African leaders. U.S. embassies in the region are typically small. Not all countries have a resident U.S. diplomatic presence. Less than half have a resident U.S. military representative. The U.S. does not have permanent representation in regional forums such as the Organization of African Unity, Economic Community of West African States or Southern African Development Community.[44]

This failure to watch Africa closely enough results in a policy that more often than not is reactive rather than proactive. It limits the U.S. ability to engage African decision makers on security issues, undermines the ability to obtain warnings of impending political crisis, and retards U.S. ability to shape the regional security environment. A unified command with exclusive responsibility for this region would assist in developing needed access and in bringing significantly greater focus to U.S. regional security policy.

With volatile situations developing in Africa on short notice, vast distances, and poorly developed or deteriorated

infrastructure, U.S. military planners recognize that African problems require a different kind of military response than the European or Asian continents. If the United States is to effectively pursue its own security interests, respond to the needs of African partners, or to mitigate humanitarian tragedy in a timely manner, it must be able to anticipate crises earlier, respond more rapidly in the initial stages, and cooperate more efficiently with regional actors.[45] But no matter how pressing the potential scenarios, the U.S. will not be prepared to act in a timely manner in a "limited engagement" theater.

IN THE WAKE OF THE COLD WAR

While official Department of Defense documents clearly state that the United States has very little strategic interests in Sub-Saharan Africa,[46] humanitarian interests or concerns for the safety of U.S. citizens have been the cause for U.S. military intervention in the region more than twenty times since the beginning of the 1990s. In fact, no region of the world has seen a greater number of foreign or U.S. military interventions in this decade than Sub-Saharan Africa. The region has also been a key target of the major international organizations and non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian assistance.

The role of the humanitarian communities is very important. They address many of the root causes of regional violence and promote the economic development which alone holds the promise for attenuating much of the regional instability. The U.S. government recognized the importance of the humanitarian community in contingency operations and has mandated the cooperation of the U.S. military establishment with such organizations.[47] This, in turn, requires that unified commands establish "habits of cooperation" which can be quickly activated during contingency operations. The unified commands take this role seriously and have endeavored to comply with the spirit and letter of the directive. However, the responsibility for continental Africa split among two separate commands, responsibility for the off-shore islands divided among two others, and the limited attention which any of the commands can afford to pay to Africa, seriously undermine the potential benefit of military cooperation with the humanitarian community in Africa.[48]

Many of Africa's continuing problems have direct security implications, including the following:[49]

- instability promoted by ethnic tension, weak economies, narcotics smuggling, unequal distribution of income, poor infrastructures, dysfunctional governments and other factors that undermine the coherence of nation-states.

- limited, inadequate and unprofessional law enforcement establishments; police that abuse rather than protect the civil populace.

- ongoing politico-military conflicts resulting in humanitarian crises.

- unprofessional, overstrength and underpaid militaries with the potential for promoting *coups d'etat*, engaging in human rights abuses and contributing to political instability.

- the influence of states such as Libya and Iran, which have contributed to rigged elections and other actions deemed unacceptable by the international community.

- the potential collapse of the governments of the "maxi-states" like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Nigeria and the Sudan, which could set off civil or sub-regional wars, halt the flow of oil and other strategic materials, create waves of refugees and threaten the safety of American citizens in a variety of ways.

- environmental degradation which reduces economic options, degrades health and may even effect global weather patterns.

As regional instability and humanitarian crises in the region continue to challenge America's interests and values, the U.S. is likely to commit resources and (possibly substantial) military forces in Africa in the future. Unfortunately, this likelihood has not been reflected in any substantive changes to

the Unified Command Plan.[50] Failure to establish a unified command or sub-unified command with exclusive responsible for Africa significantly limits the continuous attention which the U.S. security community pays to the region, could seriously compromise U.S. regional interests, and will make the inevitable military interventions more costly.

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FOR AFRICA

While past United States foreign policy towards Sub-Saharan African has been generally reactive, unsteady and late, thus allowing events and crises to drive policy,[51] the Clinton administration has demonstrated a renewed interest in this region. An April 1998 visit by the President to six nations of Sub-Saharan Africa underscored his personal interest in the sub-region and seemed to presage an increased United States commitment to the development of Sub-Saharan Africa. While the tangible material results of the Clinton visit may have been limited, Africans generally reacted very positively to this expression of U.S. interest.

The Clinton administration has articulated three policy goals for Africa that require substantial and direct involvement: enhancing security to promote peace and stability; promoting prosperity by integrating Africa into the world economy; and fostering democracy and respect for human rights.[52]

These three core policy goals in turn support a variety of specific interests.[53]

Policymakers are well aware of the fact that they cannot subcontract the responsibility for securing America's interests in Africa to any existing alliance or ally. As the "one indispensable country"[54] in the post-Cold War world, the United States will almost inevitably take the lead in ensuring that its priorities are secured. But with competing commitments around the world, the U.S. is limited in the resources it can commit to that effort in Africa. The Cold War policy of generously distributing resources to any pro-Western or anti-Soviet state around the world no longer applies.[55]

Current U.S. strategy and policy for Africa do not adequately reflect the changed geo-political landscape, nor do they realistically establish an order of importance for U.S. security interests in this region of the world. The challenge of balancing resources against those interests to realize the best use of limited assets is a key role of the unified command.[56] Under current circumstances, it is not being accomplished well in Africa.[57]

A truly regional representative of the United States, the unified combatant commander also functions as a singular subject matter expert for his or her area of responsibility, particularly in regard to security issues. The division of

responsibility for Africa among various unified commands makes it difficult for the U.S. to prioritize its regional security interests and pursue them consistently.[58] The differing organizational cultures and geographical foci of the unified commands, combined with the differing personalities of their leaders, lend an unfortunate subjectivity to U.S. security relationships in Africa. Despite the best efforts of U.S. military staff officers, African civil and military leaders themselves have expressed puzzlement over the Unified Command Plan, especially with regard to its involvement with Africa.[59]

In view of a U.S. regional policy that has of late been more reactive than proactive, it is reasonable to suggest that the current Unified Command Plan has worked against U.S. regional interests. An examination of the two regional unified commands with the largest responsibility for the continent supports this observation.

With thirty-nine of fifty-three African countries in its area of responsibility and with security assistance administration responsibilities for the nations of Sao Tome and Principe, and Cape Verde, the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) is the unified command responsible for most of the African continent.[60] However, more immediate threats to U.S. national interests have garnered the lion's share of USEUCOM's attention. Ongoing military operations in Bosnia and Yugoslavia, the recent

expansion of NATO, inclusion of European Former States of the Soviet Union into its area of responsibility, the Arab-Israeli peace process and continuing involvement in Northern Iraq have required the command to focus on the European and Middle Eastern geographic regions. Africa is by necessity relegated to the position of a "limited engagement" theater.[61]

The U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) has responsibility for the remainder of the countries on the African mainland, specifically, those nations bordering on the Red Sea. This is but a small part of CENTCOM's area of responsibility that stretches 3100 miles east to west and 3600 miles north to south. Included within this region are twenty-five nations spread across Africa, Southwest Asia, the Middle East and Central Asia (including the Arabian Gulf countries), seventy percent of the proven oil reserves in the world and 428 million people.[62] Couple this with the ongoing efforts to incorporate the Central Asian countries of the former states of the Soviet Union into the regional engagement plan, and Africa is now little more than a sideshow to CENTCOM's main attractions.[63]

CENTCOM's "Africa" focus is highlighted most clearly by comparing the continuing and increasing level of military and diplomatic effort expended in the Arabian Gulf since 1987, which U.S. policy makers view as a vital national interest[64], to the events that transpired in Somalia from August 1992 to March

1994. In the former, the United States committed itself to a major theater war to secure its strategic objectives. In the latter, ninety-three U.S. casualties were sufficient to cause the nation to abandon the operation with conditions in country very similar to when the U.S. first intervened.[65]

Nor are the existing unified commands particularly aligned with African cultural realities. For instance, U.S. humanitarian intervention in Rwanda (a USEUCOM responsibility) in 1994 required extensive use of Kenyan ports and airfields, but Kenya falls within CENTCOM's area of responsibility.[66] The existing UCP structure was poorly designed to facilitate this contingency involvement.

The same structural dilemma has occurred more recently with the re-emergence of the east African Community (EAC), consisting of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. This sub-regional entity is developing a mutual security infrastructure making it a logical partner for a U.S. unified command.[67] Unfortunately, Kenya is within the CENTCOM area, while Tanzania and Uganda are within the EUCOM area.

More importantly, America's relative lack of pressing regional interests means that the attention of its senior policy makers to African issues will be inherently sporadic and episodic. This makes it even more important to maintain close, consistent relations with emerging sub-regional organizations

and with regional actors - a key unified command role. To be effective, the unified command responsible for this region must have a nuanced appreciation for the interests and perspectives of regional actors, and must be in constant communication with regional partners.[68] It also must have an organizational culture compatible with the region. This is true of EUCOM in its NATO relationships, and of CENTOM in its Arabian Gulf connections, and of PACOM in the Far East. It is true of none of these in Africa.

A LOOK AT THE FUTURE

To date, U.S. foreign policy in regards to Africa, and specifically Sub-Saharan Africa, has been reactive rather than proactive, and is generally driven by events rather than shaping events.[69] The consequences of this "limited engagement" is that African problems have obliged the U.S. military to undertake a continuing series of contingency operations, with the requirement for future interventions highly possible and very probable. If any region of the world warrants the kind of "shaping" now prescribed by U.S. strategic doctrine,[70] surely that region is Africa.

Sub-Saharan Africa faces a future of both promise and peril. Free from the controls of both European colonialism and the follow on East-West conflict of the Cold War, Africa finally has

the opportunity to develop to its full potential. This is a region immensely rich in mineral, energy and ocean resources. Yet, while opportunities for the future are many, new obstacles to peace and prosperity are legion. Africa is caught between traditional and modern norms. Rapidly increasing urbanization coupled with a similar explosion in population growth is putting enormous pressures on already strained national infrastructures and on the natural environment. Continuing and increasing civil, ethnic and religious conflicts across the region make the possibility of future tragedy on the scale of a Somalia or Rwanda higher in Sub-Saharan Africa than anywhere else on the planet.

While United States security interests in Africa are minimal and economic interests currently are limited, the developed world does not ignore humanitarian tragedy. As the "one indispensable country" in the post-Cold War world, the United States will at times accede to international pressures to take the lead in addressing the problems of Sub-Saharan Africa. For the immediate future, this will require the capacity to intervene militarily when appropriate. A reluctance to accept this responsibility will undermine important international relationships and ultimately will require a far greater commitment and involvement of U.S. resources when events finally force the U.S. hand.

It is in the best interests of the United States to stay actively involved in the region to ensure strategic objectives are accomplished and diplomatic and political goals achieved. The Department of Defense already plays some role in U.S. efforts in Africa to promote democratization, increase the regard for human rights, promote conflict resolution and generate economic prosperity.[71] Those efforts could be more effectively managed by structural change within the Unified Command Plan.

If any region of the world warrants careful U.S. attention to potential coalitions to spare total reliance on U.S. resources, surely that region is Africa. This is a key unified command role,[72] which can best be accomplished by creating a unified or sub-unified command exclusively for Sub-Saharan Africa. The advantages of creating "an area oriented senior U.S. military command"[73] even if it is an "economy of force" command, would far outweigh any perceived disadvantages.

CONCLUSION

The question, then, is whether or not U.S. policy goals and priorities for Sub-Saharan Africa are aligned with the structural ability to secure them, realistic based on present funding levels, and adequate for anticipating and alleviating crises. "Shaping" the environment to avoid crisis is a far less expensive option than responding to full-blown emergencies with

expensive military interventions. Events since the early 1990s suggest that U.S. policy "ends" in Africa are not aligned with "ways and means." The inevitable result of failure to anticipate crisis is horrifying human tragedy and a requirement to resort to expensive military operations. At the same time, Africa is in a period of significant social and political flux, more open to U.S. assistance on security issues than at any time in the past. If there ever were a time for the U.S. to "shape" the regional security environment, this is it.

The Unified Command Plan was developed in the wake of World War II to ensure the missions, functions, responsibilities and force structure of the operational forces of the Unites States military were organized in the best interests of national security. Since its inception, this plan has been revised seventeen times in reaction to changes in the strategic environment, advances in technology and the growing global commitment of U.S. forces. Throughout much of this same period, Sub-Saharan Africa has been little more than a footnote in this plan. There is no good reason why this necessarily should continue to be the case.

Although it would not solve Africa's many problems, nor even necessarily secure all of America's regional interests, a unified command with exclusive responsibility for Africa would provide many advantages. It would maintain the constant

attention of senior U.S. military planners to African security issues, facilitating long-term, coherent programs to shape the regional environment. This attention would be much less subject to diversion due to events in the Balkans or the Arabian Gulf. Such a command would be in constant communication with African civil and military leaders, and with U.S. diplomats in the region. This would provide better warning of impending crises, a much more nuanced understanding of African interests and more options for crisis management than is presently the case. It would also better communicate U.S. concerns to African partners and potential adversaries. It would certainly signal an important U.S. commitment to regional stability and regional development.

The unified combatant commander plays a key role in American efforts to realize regional strategic objectives as outlined in the National Security Strategy. This includes conflict avoidance as well as conflict management. But with responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa divided amongst four of the five regional combatant commands, and with none focused consistently on African issues, U.S. regional interests are poorly served. As both his right within the law and his responsibility as the Commander-in-Chief and Chief Executive Officer of the nation, the President should establish a unified

or subordinate unified combatant command with exclusive responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa.

WORD COUNT = 5,941

ENDNOTES

[1] Joint History Office, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1993 (Washington, D.C.: February 1995), Foreword.

[2] Ibid, Overview.

[3] "General Military Law," Code of Federal Regulatons, Title 10 - Armed Forces, (Washington: U.S General Services Administration, National Archives and Record Service, Office of the Federal register, as amended through December 31, 1994), Chapter VI, Section 161.

[4] FY 97 National Defense Authorization Act, Sec 905.

[5] US Department of Defense, United States Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa, (Washington: US Dept. of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, August 1995). p. 3.

[6] Interventions include: noncombatant evacuations from Liberia (1990, 1996), Somalia (1991), Zaire/Congo (1991), Sierra Leone (1992, 1997), Rwanda (1994), and the Central African Republic (1996); humanitarian relief operations in Somalia (1992), Rwanda (1994), and Central Africa (1996); election support in Angola (1992); support of UN withdrawal from Somalia (1995); and support to deployment of the monitoring group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG) in Liberia (1997). There were multiple operations in some countries in some years. Dan Henk, "US National Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa," Parameters, US Army War College Quarterly, vol. xxvii, no. 4 (Winter 97-98), p. 92.

[7] National Security Act of 1947, sec 202, par 124, 80th Congress, 26 Jul 1947.

[8] "General Military Law," Chapter VI, Section 161.

[9] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Unified Action Armed Forces (Joint Pub 0-2) Washington, D.C.; February 24, 1995, p. xv.

[10] Charles S. Robb, "Examining Alternative UCP Structures," Joint Force Quarterly, (Winter '96-97'), p. 85. Regional commands are responsible for a specific geographic region, while functional commands support specific military functions.

[11] For a more detailed explanation refer to: Office of the Chairman, Implementation of the Unified Command Plan, MCM 24-98 (Washington: 9 February 1998).

[12]National Security Act of 1947, sec 202, par 124, 80th Congress, 26 Jul 1947.

[13] U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff. Unified Action Armed Forces (Joint Pub 0-2) Washington, D.C.; February 24, 1995, p. xv.

[14] Headquarters, U.S. European Command, Peacetime Engagement Activities in Africa (ECJ5-M), 1 July 1998, p. 2.e

[15] The assistant secretaries that run the regional bureaus of the Department of State come to mind as analogous authorities, but they are based in Washington - not in the region. Their organizations are very small compared to a CINC's staff. The desk officers in a bureau are more focused on the needs and functions of the U.S. embassies in the region than on the foreign leadership per se.

[16] Material presented in this section is derived from: Joint History Office, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1993 (Washington, D.C.: February 1995).

[17] For a more detailed explanation see The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1993, p.12-13

[18] The lack of concern for Africa was driven in large part by the fact that all of Sub-Saharan Africa except Liberia and Ethiopia were colonies of European powers until the late 1950s. Most African countries received independence in the early 1960s.

[19] "General Military Law," Chapter VI, Section 161.

[20] Office of the Chairman, Implementation of the Unified Command Plan, MCM 24-98 (Washington: 9 February 1998), p. 1. On 1 October 1998, USEUCOM assumed responsibility for the Western Slavic and Caucasus states of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. On 1 October 1999, USCENTCOM assumes responsibility for the five Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgystan. AOR shift between USSOUTHCOM and USACOM occurred on 1 June 1997.

[21] See for example, C. William Fox, Jr., Military Medical Operations in Sub-Saharan Africa: The DOD "Point of the Spear" for a New Century, (USAWC Strategic Studies Institute), June 24, 1997, p. 4.

[22] Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, A New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (Draft), (Office of African Affairs, 15 April 1999), p. 3. The Office of the Secretary of Defense to endeavoring to develop a DOD-wide "Strategy for Africa" in support of an overall U.S. government strategy for engagement in the region. Under the supervision of Dr. Nancy Walker, this effort has included informal consultations among OSD, Joint Staff, Unified Commands, DOS, the NSC and selected African officials. However, the sheer bureaucratic difficulty of forging agreement among complex bureaucracies is itself an indictment of the current approach to unified command responsibility for Africa.

[23] Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, A New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (Draft), (Office of African Affairs, 15 April 1999), pp. 7,8. See also, Dan Henk, Peace and Security in Africa: Contributions by the United States, Halfway House, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies Monograph N035, March 1999.

[24] Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, A New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (Draft), (Office of African Affairs, 15 April 1999), p. 9.

[25] Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia Deluxe, 1997, "Africa."

[26] Dan Henk and Steven Metz, The United States and the Transformation of African Security: *The African Crisis response Initiative and Beyond*, (Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College), 5 December 1997, p. 2.

[27] Interview with COL Dan Henk, Director of African Studies, U.S. Army War College, 1 April 1999.

[28] Chester A. Crocker, "Why Africa Is Important," Foreign Service Journal, June 1995, Vol. 72, No. 6, p. 28. Also, Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, A New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (Draft), (Office of African Affairs, 15 April 1999), p. 4.

[29] Crocker, pp. 24-33.

[30] Rhoda E. Howard, "Civil Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa." International Journal, Canadian Institute of International Affairs, vol. LI, no. 1 (Winter 95-96), p. 28.

[31] Article III of the charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Charter of the Organization of African Unity, (Addis Ababa: May 1963).

[32] Ian Fisher with Norimitsu Onishi, "Congo's Struggle May Unleash Broad Strife to Redraw Africa," The Washington Post, 12 January 1999, A1. See also, Dan Henk, Colonel, USA, "Democratic Republic of Congo: Point Paper," (U.S. Army War College, 1998), p. 7.

[33] Tom Lodge, "Armed Conflict in Africa since the Cold War," (Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand.) p. 1.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Angola, Chad, Namibia, Sudan and Zimbabwe have intervened on the side of the Kabila government, while Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda have backed rebel factions.

[36] A typology of conflicts in Africa since the end of the Cold War can be constructed under the following headings: ethnic competition for control of the state; regionalist or secessionist rebellions; continuation of liberation conflicts between competing movements; fundamentalist religious opposition to secular governments; warfare arising from state degeneration or collapse; protracted conflict within politicized militaries; border disputes. Lodge, p. 1.

[37] Ibid.

[38] See, for example, Christopher Smith, Peter Batchelor and Jakkie Potgieter, "Small Arms Management and Peacekeeping in Southern Africa," UNIDIR/96/21, 1996; and Edward J. Laurence, "Light Weapons and Intrastate Conflict: Early Warning Factors and Preventative Action," A Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, 1996.

[39] Kathi Austin, (Consultant to Human Rights Watch (Arms Division)), "Testimony," U.S. Congress, House, Sub-committee in International Human Rights, May 1998.

[40] Al Venter, " Arms Pour into Africa," New African, January 1999, p. 14. Also, in late 1998, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright committed the U.S. to pursue efforts to resolve the problem, and a Department of State led inter-agency working group currently is attempting to develop U.S. policy to pursue that commitment.

[41] Anthony Marley, Lieutenant Colonel, USA (Ret). Mr. Marley is a highly experience former Foreign Area Service Officer, who served in Africa and in policymaking assignments in the course of a remarkable career. Interview by author, 19 April 1999.

[42] US Department of Defense, United States Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa, p. 3.

[43] Dan Henk, "Peace Operations: Views from Southern and Eastern Africa," U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute Occasional Paper, June 1996, pp. 30-37.

[44] Even within the staffs of the unified commands responsible for parts of Africa, analysts and staff officers assigned to keep track of African issues frequently are diverted to other pressing problems until a crisis occurs in Africa. Marley, 19 April 1999. Also, Linda Knight, USEUCOM staff officer with considerably African experience; interview by author on 19 April 1999.

[45] Alexander McGill, Colonel South African Army, " An African Rapid Deployment Force." Military Review - Professional Journal of U.S. Army, (May-June 97), p. 26.

[46] US Department of Defense, United States Security Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa, (Washington: US Dept. of Defense, Office of International Security Affairs, August 1995), p. 3.

[47] See, specifically, Presidential Decision Directive (PDD)56.

[48] One result of the lack of communication between U.S. military authorities and the humanitarian community occurred as a result of the war in eastern Zaire in 1997. The humanitarian community accused the U.S. government and the U.S. military of working in deliberate concert with the government of Rwanda to harm Hutu refugees in Eastern Zaire. These accusations badly undermined the willingness of both sides to cooperate in ways that would have mitigated the tragedy. This situation highlights the merit of PDD-56 and the importance of continuous

peacetime relations between a unified command and the humanitarian community. See Nik Gowing, New Challenges and Problems for Information Management in Complex Emergencies, A BBC Conference Paper, 27 May 1998.

[49] Larry Hanauer and Nancy J. Walker, "EUCOM and Sub-Saharan Africa." Joint Force Quarterly, (Spring 97), p. 104.

[50] Both the FY 97 and FY 99 assessments of missions, responsibilities and force structure of the unified commands did consider different command arrangements for Sub-Saharan Africa (along with other geographic regions of the world), including assigning Sub-Saharan Africa to its own unified or sub-unified command. Any recommendations for changes to the Unified Command Plan have not been made at the time this paper was completed. (Source in the Office of the Joint Staff Policy and Plans who declined to be named.)

[51] Dan Henk, "U.S. National Interests in Sub-Saharan Africa." Parameters, U.S. Army War College Quarterly, vol. xxvii, no. 4 (Winter 97-98), p. 3.

[52] Hanauer and Walker p. 104.

[53] These include: regional stability; access to key persons, institutions, facilities; economic opportunity; safety of U.S. citizens; region free from weapons of mass destruction; region free of sponsors or safe havens for transnational threats (such as terrorism, criminal cartels and epidemic diseases); regional governance that is humane, competent and accountable; sustained economic development; early information and warning; regional comity and cooperation; unthreatened natural environment; and security of regional borders. Henk, "U.S. National Interests," p. 3.

[54] Arthur E. Dewey, U.S. Army Peacekeeping Institute, Carlisle, PA., and Dr. Margaret Zeigler, Congressional Hunger Center, Washington, D.C., Comprehensive Engagement in Post-Cold War Complex Contingencies: A "Comprehensive Campaign Plan" Approach for Ex-Yugoslavia and Similar Complex Contingency Operations, December 1998. p. 42.

[55] Hanauer and Walker, p. 107.

[56] COL Tom Dempsey, U.S. Army Foreign Service Officer with African experience and faculty member of the U.S. Army War College, interview by author on 19 April 1999, Carlisle, PA.

[57] Office of Secretary of State, "FY 99 Congressional Presentation for Foreign Operations," Feb 98. This is one source of comparison of funds distributed to Africa versus other regions of the world in several different categories; it does not include funding provided through USAID.

[58] For instance, the permanent staff of the OAU is based in a CENTCOM country, but most of its member states are in EUCOM's area of responsibility, with some member states in ACOM and PACOM regions as well. This makes it difficult for the U.S government to develop a single, unified program to assist the OAU in developing a conflict resolution capability (to include equipping/deploying military observer missions). The U.S. faces a similar dilemma in managing its African Crisis response Initiative (ACRI). Two African participants (Eritrea and Ethiopia) are in the CENTCOM region, with the other seven countries being EUCOM responsibilities. That is why the ACRI is managed by an office in Washington, D.C. (currently at State) rather than in a unified command, where it more logically should be. This also means that two different U.S. Army Special Forces groups are required for training ACRI participants, presenting the possibility at least of differing approaches or standards. Coordination meetings pertaining to security assistance programs and/or operations in Africa between EUCOM-CENTCOM-PACOM are extremely rare and largely ineffective. This results in dissimilar (and often disjointed) security assistance programs in neighboring countries in which U.S. interests/objectives are identical, sending badly mixed signals. One final example is "Natural Fire," a multilateral, peace operations exercise conducted by Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in 1998. When Kenya came to the U.S. asking for support and assistance in conducting this exercise, debate over funding issues between EUCOM and CENTCOM dragged on for so long that the African nations finally conducted the exercise with their own assets. Marley and Knight.

[59] LtCOL Anthony Benade, South African National Defense Force and student at U.S Army War College (USAWC), and COL Dan Henk, Director of African Studies, USAWC. Interview by author on 16 April 99.

[60] USEUCOM'S responsibilities include supervision of security assistance programs such as excess defense articles (EDA) and international military education and training (IMET), military exercises (MEDFLAG and FLINTLOCK), special operations joint combined exchange training (JCET) and humanitarian de-mining operations (HDO)). In addition, USEUCOM is engaged in two new programs unique to U.S. foreign policy in Africa: the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) and the African Center for Security Studies (ACSS). Headquarters, U.S. European Command, Campaign Plan for Sub-Saharan Africa, (1 July 1998), (no page numbers).

[61] On 1 October 1998, USEUCOM assumed responsibility for the Western Slavic and Caucasus states of Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. With the recent addition of Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, 19 independent nations now comprise the membership of NATO. USEUCOM is also responsibility for the Partnership for Peace program with former Warsaw Pact nations. Headquarters, U.S. European Command, Campaign Plan for Sub-Saharan Africa, (1 July 1998), p. 6.

[62] On 1 October 1999, USCENTCOM assumes responsibility for the five Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgystan.

[63] The CENTCOM engagement plan divides the area of responsibility into four sub-regions: Horn of Africa; Arabian Peninsula; Northern Red Sea States; and South and Central Asia. While there is no ranking of importance or priority amongst these sub-regions within CENTCOM, and in fact, efforts are made to ensure each region is afforded equal status, ongoing events in the Arabian Gulf have caused this not to be true in the near term. (Telephonic interview on 16 April 1999 with USCENTCOM J5 action officer for Africa who declined to be named)

[64] The White House, A National Security Strategy for a New Century, May 1998, pp. 5, 52.

[65] It would be unfair of course, to blame CENTCOM for the U.S. policy decision to withdraw from Somalia in the wake of the October 1993 ambush in Mogadishu. However, a unified command more connected to African socio-political dynamics probably would have significantly affected the way in which the U.S. intervened in Somalia in 1992, possibly finding a more indigenously "African" solution. It probably also would have exerted pressure on the intervening coalition to pursue more

realistic and achievable objectives. An "African" unified command also would have clearly understood the unfortunate regional ramifications of the world's superpower abandoning a regional commitment after a seemingly minor setback.

[66] Telephonic interview with USCENTCOM J5 action officer, 16 April 1999.

[67] Ibid.

[68] This is illustrated by the U.S. humanitarian intervention in Rwanda in 1994. Though a multi-million dollar U.S. commitment, Africans viewed it as slow, grudging and limited. This was due in part to the insistence of its commander that the mission be very short and limited in scope. A year after the last Americans had departed, Ugandan military officers were still complaining of unpaid bills left in the hasty departure. For USEUCOM, the operation was a model of efficiency. For Africans, it was a clear statement that America - and its military - were fickle partners in efforts to resolve regional problems. This is the kind of perception on the part of regional allies that a dedicated unified command would be at pains to dispel. Interview with COL Dan Henk, 17 April 1999.

[69] Dan Henk, "Uncharted Paths, Uncertain Vision: U.S. Military Involvements in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Wake of the Cold War," (USAFA: Institute For National Security Studies, March 1998), p. ix.

[70] The White House, National Security Strategy for a New Century, October 1998, p. 8.

[71] Office of the Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, A New Strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa (Draft), (Office of African Affairs, 15 April 1999), pp. 5,6.

[72] Headquarters, U.S. European Command, Peacetime Engagement Activities in Africa *(ECJ5-M)*, 1 July 1998.

[73] As described in Joint History Office, The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1993, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, (February 1995), p. 39.

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